

OUT

who'd have thought it.
after being down 10 to 1 in the second inning
to the best team in the whole world
there we were
trailing 12 to 11 in the bottom of the tenth
men on first and third
one out
and i'm up.
i fouled off five pitches in a row.
everyone was yelling for me to hang tough
and look for my pitch.
real life excitement, man.
then he hangs a curve
a big fat slow pitch
and i smack it good
right to short to second to first and out.

AWOL

it was about the Swede.
everyone was standing around
in the back room talking about why
he didn't come to work that day.
it seems that his kids
at the request of their mother
had set his car on fire
and that the explosion of the gas tank
had set the house on fire and it burned
down to the ground.
so pistol in hand
he went looking for her
but he was so drunk
that he shot himself
when he was ranting, raving
and threatening to blow her head off.
having lived forty-five years
with one oar in the water
it's a cinch he can make it
the rest of the way
with only one ear.

TRASH

the garbage company tells you
that they will pick up one large piece of garbage
like furniture or an appliance
every month.

so one morning
you finally get up the energy
to carry the old couch
out to the curb.
when you come home from work
it's still sitting there.

you call them up
prepared to give them
the biggest bunch of shit they ever heard
and they tell you that they need
three days notice.

i'm not just mad
i mean
it's real embarrassing
people knowing what a pile of junk
my furniture must be
if i waited this long
to throw out that couch.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

at this late age
to try to survive
the technological threat of the future
one thing struck me more than any other.

i don't care how sick and perverted
or how typical it is but
the first thing i noticed
the first time i went to college
and the first thing i noticed
upon my return ten years later
was the girls.

TWO OUT OF THREE

"Stroberg, Stroberg, Stroberg," he said
squeezing the words out of the corner of his mouth.
"Can't you read the damn sign?
It says turn off the engine
and no smoking, doesn't it?"

he had me there.
forget that it was twenty below zero
minus eighty with the windchill factor.
there i was
sitting in the cab
engine and heater running
smoking a cigarette and reading Time magazine
like i always do when i gas up the truck.